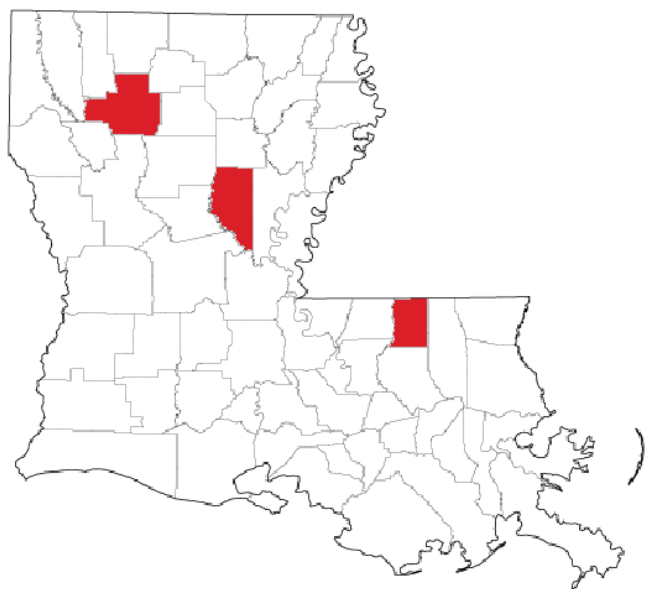


What if YOU knew that EVERYONE in Bienville, La Salle, and St. Helena Counties was going to have a life-threatening medical emergency this year...¹⁵



leaving about 2,200 Louisianians dead² and thousands more seriously disabled.

WOULD YOU TRY TO DO SOMETHING TO HELP?



EVERY YEAR, there are about 39,000 reported cases of stroke in Louisiana,³ and 2,200 Louisianians lose their lives battling a stroke.²

WHY SHOULD LOUISIANA LEGISLATORS BE CONCERNED?

In Louisiana, the stroke death rate is 1.2 times the national average, and the state ranks seventh in stroke mortality in the United States.¹ About 2,200 Louisianians die from stroke each year.²

Stroke drains the economy. In Louisiana, there are about 39,000 reported cases of stroke each year, with an annual price tag of \$250 million in medical expenses and \$350 million in lost productivity.³

Stroke care is insufficient and fragmented in Louisiana. Without adequate treatment — within three hours of the first symptoms, stroke victims can suffer severe neurological damage or death.⁴

Awareness of stroke warning signs and the need for urgent care is dangerously low. Only 11.5% of Louisianians are aware of all the correct symptoms of a stroke and the need to call 911.⁵

Many Louisianians have a ticking time bomb—inside them. Two of the most common causes of stroke are high blood pressure and high cholesterol. Smoking doubles the risk for stroke.^{6,7} **Over 32% of Louisianians have high blood pressure, nearly 34% have high cholesterol and over 22% smoke.⁸**

WHAT CAN LOUISIANA LEGISLATORS DO?

Advocate for a stroke system of care, including wireless, enhanced 911 coverage. Coordinated stroke response and care gives stroke victims in Louisiana access to the most effective treatment.⁹

Support efforts to fund certified primary stroke centers. Stroke centers are medical facilities staffed by health care professionals with specific training in rapidly diagnosing and treating strokes.¹⁰ **There are only five certified primary stroke centers in Louisiana.¹¹**

Promote stroke awareness campaigns. Awareness of stroke warning signs and the need to call 911 saves lives and reduces disability.¹²

Make healthy choices easier. Support policies and programs that will help Louisianians make lifestyle and behavior changes to reduce their risk for stroke. 80% of strokes can be prevented.¹³

Extend insurance coverage. Support policies that include health care coverage for chronic disease prevention, such as tobacco cessation and blood pressure and cholesterol screening, treatment and control.

Support policies focused on Louisianians at high risk for stroke. Implement programs focused on high-risk groups such as African-Americans, Hispanics, uninsured, low-income Louisianians, and the elderly.¹⁴

WHAT IS A STROKE?

A stroke happens when the blood supply to the brain is cut off or when a blood vessel bursts. Without oxygen, brain cells begin to die and death or permanent disability can result.

The five warning signs of stroke are:

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm, or leg , especially on one side of the body;
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding;
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes;
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination;
- Sudden severe headache with no known cause.

**Stroke is an emergency.
Call 911**

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